



**Kensington Group Practice**

DONEGALL ROAD AND FINAGHY  
Medical Centre

# August Newsletter

29TH AUGUST 2025

**We will be migrating to a new computer system at the end of September 2025.**

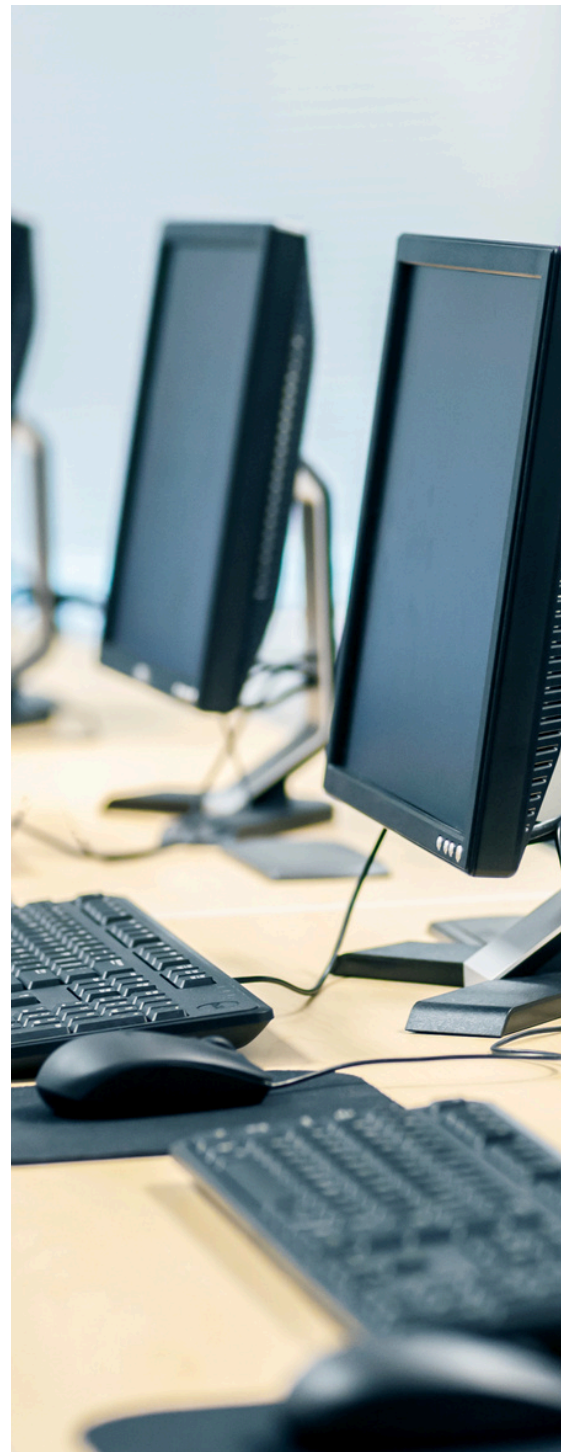
**We'll soon be switching from our current clinical system, Vision, to a new one called EMIS. This change is part of a wider rollout happening across Northern Ireland – around two-thirds of GP practices are already using EMIS, and the rest, like us, are now in the process of switching over.**

**Please be aware there will be some temporary and unavoidable disruption to our services while these changes are made.**

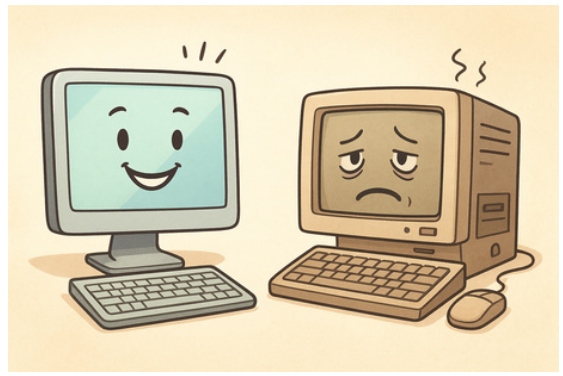
**We are hopeful that with good planning - and building good awareness amongst our patients - we can minimise difficulties.**

**In due course, in many ways our new computer system will help us modernise our service, and introduce efficiencies that will in turn benefit our patients, and we thank our patient body in advance for your patience and understanding, as we undertake this process.**

**Please read on for more information.**



# So what do you need to do now?



Please consider if you will be needing to order regular medication towards the end of September.

- There will be a few days - **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September** when we have limited or no access to our computer systems.
- During this short time, we won't be issuing routine prescriptions.

To help avoid difficulty and delay, we kindly ask

- Please order your prescriptions earlier than you normally would, so you don't have to seek a prescription during the above dates.
- Community Pharmacy Emergency Supply service remains an option in emergency situations where you may be out of medication. Please be advised there are certain criteria that must be met to be eligible to use this service.
- Requests for regular medication may be referred to your pharmacy to avail of the pharmacy emergency supply scheme.

## What about Online Services?

Many of you currently use Patient Services for booking appointments and ordering prescriptions online. After the switch, you'll need to re-register with a new service called Patient Access (the EMIS version of Patient Services).

A high level of adoption of Online Services offers many advantages to both you, as a patient, and to the practice, as it takes pressure off our telephone lines and helps us work more efficiently.

- You won't be able to re-register until after the migration.
- Whilst we'd encourage you to re-register as promptly as is practicable, we will begin sending emails with the registration details in the days after this migration date, so you don't need to contact the practice in the first instance. Please keep an eye on your spam/junk folders.



**After the 1<sup>st</sup> October, is there any other way I can order my prescriptions online, before I fully register with the new EMIS online portal?**

- **Yes - visit <https://www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/request-repeat-prescription-form>**

**What about appointments after the 30<sup>th</sup> September?**

- **In the period immediately following our go-live date, staff will be undergoing further training and familiarisation, but appointments will be available. Initially these will be primarily “on-the-day-urgent” appointments. “Routine appointments” will be phased back in shortly afterwards, as we get up to speed with our new system.**

**We’ll continue to share more details through various channels, in due course, and latest information can always be found here: [www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/emis-migration](http://www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/emis-migration)**

**We thank you in advance for your patience and understanding as we work through this process; it will take us a little time to familiarise with our new system.**

**We trust that in due course, these modernisations will help offer advantages to the practice, that will help us provide better, more efficient care to you.**

# Appointments are now available to book for your Flu vaccine, and Covid vaccine, if you are eligible for these.

Whilst it may seem a little early to be thinking about this - as with previous years, we will expect to begin providing our flu and covid vaccines in early October.

Whilst many would have booked their flu and covid vaccine appointments online, many would still book by phone, and this then would place pressure on our phone system.

**Appointments of flu and covid vaccines are available to book NOW; we have opened the diaries earlier in the year than usual.**

We hope that by doing so, we can schedule a significant proportion of our flu and covid appointments at an early stage, to relieve telephone pressures closer to the time while we are migrating.

**It will not be possible to book appointments during *Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September*, when we have limited or no access to our computer systems.**

**Eligibility for flu vaccine remains the same as it has done in previous years.**

**There has been a change to Covid eligibility; it is now only being offered to those over 75 years old, and the severely immunosuppressed only.**

If eligible. please book your slot **NOW**, online if you can, or by phoning 02890 325679. This will help us greatly as we plan our computer migration. We will also begin sending invitations shortly.

Please **DO NOT** book a slot if you are not eligible to receive the vaccine.

[Please click on the picture to access our seasonal vaccinations hub, which includes eligibility information](#)





# **New telephone system coming soon, to help improve patient access.**

**We know our phone lines are extremely busy, with hundreds of calls every day; this is not an issue unique to our GP surgery! We know this can be frustrating. Unfortunately, simply adding more staff to answer calls isn't possible — not only are there funding limitations, but our reception and admin team also carry out many other vital jobs that keep the practice running.**

**The best way to help reduce call volumes is by using Online Services to order prescriptions and book appointments — something we strongly encourage where possible.**

- **We are investing in a new telephone system – coming soon, and we will be trialing various new features:**
  - **The option to leave a voicemail for prescription requests.**
  - **Call-back requests, so you don't need to wait in a queue.**
  - **More lines, so fewer engaged tones during busy periods.**
- **Our new clinical system, EMIS has significantly improved text functionality, helping follow up on results, organise appointments etc, which may avoid the need for you to phone in, or us to phone out, in certain circumstances.**

**These changes should make it easier for you to get the help you need, while freeing up our team to support you in other important ways.**

**What else can our patients do to help with reducing call volumes?**

- **There are many self-referral services, where you can access care, without needing to speak to a GP first. Please visit <https://www.kensingtonmedicalcentre.co.uk/self-referral-services>**
- **The Pharmacy First scheme covers a range of conditions, that offer assessment, and treatment if appropriate, without having to request a prescription or wait to see a GP. See the next page.**
- **Get the right care, at the right time - visit <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/how-use-your-health-services> for an overview of health provision in Northern Ireland.**

# Pharmacy First - what it offers.

The Pharmacy First service is available at participating community pharmacies across Northern Ireland.

If you have an everyday health condition, you can use the Pharmacy First service to get advice and treatment from a local pharmacist, without waiting for an appointment to see your GP.

Pharmacies benefit from their accessibility within our local communities, and may have longer opening hours including weekends and holidays, and some pharmacies have late evening opening hours.

You can call into the pharmacy for a private consultation with the pharmacist without needing to make an appointment.

There are five services within Pharmacy First:

- [Every Day Health Conditions](#)
- [Emergency Hormonal Contraception \(the morning after pill\)](#)
- [Urinary Tract Infection \(UTI\)](#)
- [Sore Throat](#)
- [Shingles](#)



**Pharmacy First** for help with everyday health conditions

HSC Health and Social Care

SAVE TIME AND AVOID WAITING TO SEE A GP

For **FREE** confidential advice and treatment ask your pharmacist **FIRST**

✓ Acne	✓ Mouth Ulcers
✓ Athlete's foot	✓ Oral Thrush
✓ Diarrhoea	✓ Scabies
✓ Ear Wax	✓ Threadworms
✓ Groin area infection	✓ Vaginal Thrush
✓ Haemorrhoids	✓ Verrucae
✓ Head lice	

**The morning after pill**  
Emergency Hormonal Contraception

I DON'T WANT TO GET PREGNANT

- ✓ FREE confidential and discreet service
- ✓ FREE supply of the morning after pill
- ✓ Available up to 120 hours after unprotected sex

Available from your local community pharmacy

**Pharmacy First** for help with everyday health conditions

HSC Health and Social Care

**Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)**

Do you have any of the following urinary symptoms?

PASSING URINE MORE OFTEN AT NIGHT?

CLOUDY URINE?

BURNING PAIN WHEN PASSING URINE?

Ask your pharmacist first for Advice, Test & Treatment (if needed) without having to contact your GP

**Pharmacy First** for help with everyday health conditions

HSC Health and Social Care

**Pharmacy First Service for the Treatment of Shingles**

I THINK I MIGHT HAVE SHINGLES

Save time and avoid waiting to see a GP. Ask your pharmacist **FIRST** for free and confidential advice and treatment for shingles.

**Pharmacy First** for help with everyday health conditions

**Pharmacy First for sore throat**

SAVE TIME AND AVOID WAITING TO SEE A GP

Ask your pharmacist **FIRST** for free and confidential advice, test and treatment for sore throat

HSC Health and Social Care

# In summary

## **ORDER PRESCRIPTIONS EARLY**

To avoid disruption, please order your repeat prescriptions by Monday 23rd September 2025.

## **RE-REGISTER ONLINE FROM 1st OCTOBER**

You'll need to register with Patient Access to use online services after the migration.

 Look out for our email with instructions (check your spam folder!).

## **BOOK YOUR FLU & COVID VACCINE, IF ELIGIBLE.**

Book now, online or call 02890 325679.

Appointments begin Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October.

**PLEASE TRY TO AVOID CALLING THE PRACTICE** between the 25<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September; as we will have limited systems access.

## **AND PLEASE BE PATIENT WITH US IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOW**

It will take us some time to familiarise ourselves with our new systems, but we believe this is a golden opportunity for us to revise our systems, and deliver better care to you into the future.